NSW DPI / Huon Yellowtail Kingfish Research Project – Stakeholder Update - October 2016

The mooring grid installation for the Yellowtail Kingfish sea pens is proceeding well on the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease in Providence Bay. An Office of Environment and Heritage approved observer has been monitoring deployment activities and recording marine fauna interactions and sightings during deployment. Cardinal markers at the corners of the lease area and much of the grid have been installed in preparation to receive two sea pens, currently moored in Newcastle Harbour.

RMS is working with Port Stephens Marine Rescue to advise mariners via 'Securite' calls of the deployment of the Research Lease. NSW DPI also placed notifications to mariners at boat ramps prior to the long weekend as well as providing media to local papers (Port Stephens Examiner, Myall News of the Area) updating the progress of the sea pen installation and warning mariners of changed conditions.

Cardinal Markers have been fitted with auto-notification technology to advise Huon/DPI/RMS should any markers move off the lease site. Sea pens will be fitted with GPS trackers to monitor their performance within the mooring grid and surface and sub-surface cameras will be fitted.

Huon Aquaculture will bring one of the sea pens just inside Port Stephens off the Boulders in the coming week to install netting. In consultation with RMS and Marine Parks, a temporary mooring will be placed on sandy sea bed in around seven metres of water. The mooring consists of two flat-bottomed cylindrical concrete blocks approximately 40 metres apart. The mooring will be in place from 8th October and Huon will remove it as soon as the works are completed (approximately 12 October).

No fish will be stocked at the Boulders and nets will not be dropped to full depth until after the pen has been towed out and moored on the Research Lease. During net installation, noise will be limited to boat engines and hydraulic cranes, and the work will take place between dawn and dusk with no lights other than any required for navigational safety.

One sea pen will be towed from Newcastle directly to the Research Lease. Subsequent sea pens for the Research Lease will most likely be rigged at the lease without needing to make this detour into Port Stephens.

Management Plans have been approved by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment and conditions relating to monitoring pre-deployment have also been met and approved by that agency. Monitoring has included: shark; water/benthos/sediment; and fauna observations and interactions. Results will be made available on the web shortly.

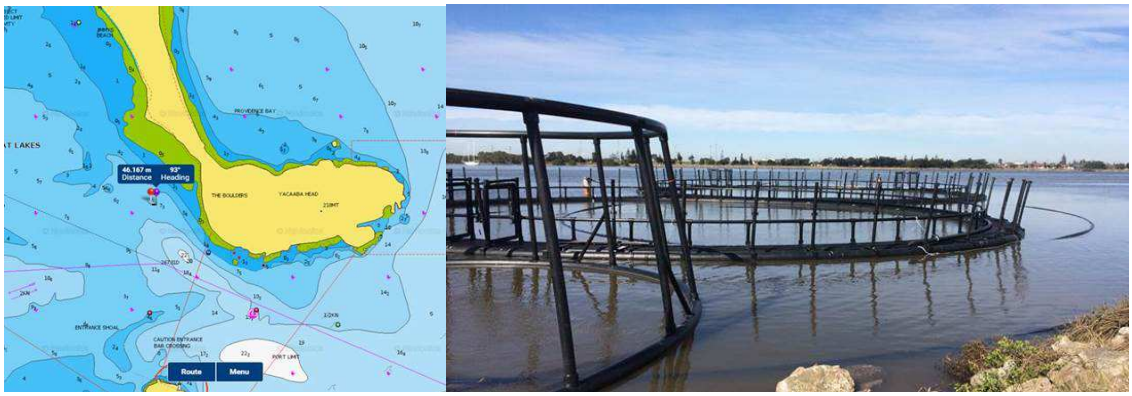
Yellowtail Kingfish fingerlings are ready for deployment and average 25+g weight or 100+mm in length. A health certification for fingerlings has been issued by NSW DPI Elizabeth Macarthur Agriculture Institute. It is planned to stock Yellowtail Kingfish to the lease via helicopter.

The emergency contact number for the Research Lease is **1300 920 987,** to be used for any incident involving the sea pens.

Recent meetings: Dolphin Swim Australia; NSW Recreational Fishing Advisory Council representative; RMS, PS-GL Marine Park, Newcastle Fishermen's Cooperative

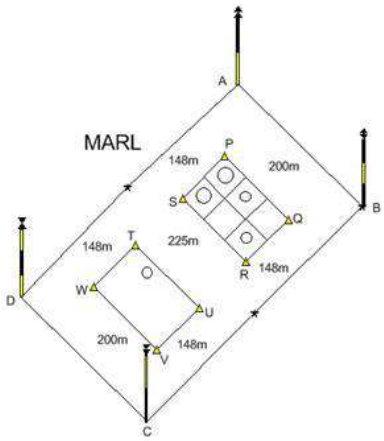
Upcoming events: Approximate on or before dates dependent on weather. Deployment of two sea pens after 8 October 2016; and stocking of Yellowtail Kingfish fingerlings 13-14 October 2016.

Further details at http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aquaculture/starting-up/finfish-aquaculture-lease-modification-application or aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au



Location of the site to rig one sea pen with nets at the Boulders, and sea pens waiting deployment in Newcastle Harbour

Approximate co-ordinates of the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease



Lease corner marks
MGA 94 Zone 56

Degs, Mins, Secs
A - 152 16' 54.0552 32 38' 50.366904
B - 152 17' 9.93372 32 39' 3.7935
C - 152 16' 41.99304 32 39' 27.11322
D - 152 16' 25.89384 32 39' 13.49604

P - 152 16' 52.24296 32 38' 58.197084
Q - 152 17' 0.34764 32 39' 5.146992
R - 152 16' 54.9084 32 39' 9.687024
S - 152 16' 46.80372 32 39' 2.737008

Metric Coords
A - 432631 6387582
B - 433048 6387171
C - 432325 6386448
D - 431902 6386865

P - 432585.71 6387340.37
Q - 432798.30 6387127.78
R - 432657.54 6386987.02
S - 432444.96 6387199.61